



# Emergency Solutions Grant: Homelessness Prevention Programs

Sponsored by  
Division of Housing Stabilization Division, DHCD and HUD  
Facilitated by Cloudburst Consulting

November 14th, 2012

# Speakers:

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# Agenda

- ▶ Introductions
- ▶ Review of key program requirements for Homelessness Prevention programs
- ▶ Review of RAFT and HomeBASE eligibility
- ▶ Feedback/question and answer session

# Submitting Questions during the Webinar

- ▶ Submit questions via the “questions” function in the Go To Webinar dashboard
- ▶ ‘Raise your hand’ function
- ▶ Questions will be answered by DHCD or Cloudburst to the extent possible during the webinar
- ▶ If time allows, questions will be answered in the Q. and A. session at the end of webinar
- ▶ Unanswered questions at the end of the webinar will be responded to by DHCD through email and will be made available on the ESG website

# DHCD ESG Website

- ▶ <http://www.mass.gov/hed/housing/stabilization/emergency-solutions-grant.html>

# Review of Key Program Requirements

Please note: This webinar is specific to DHCD Homelessness Prevention programs.

Please have a copy of the Homelessness Prevention Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements available during this presentation.



# Homeless Eligibility

- ▶ Individual(s) must be at imminent risk of homelessness
- ▶ Must have a Writ of Summary Process and Complaint, no exceptions

# Homeless Eligibility

- ▶ AND Must meet at least one of the following 3 criteria:
  - Have a prior episode of homelessness in an emergency shelter (or place not meant for habitation)
  - Have a history of domestic violence
  - Have an adult or a child or youth with a diagnosed disability including mental illness or substance use disorder in the household

# Diagnosed Disability

- ▶ Must be verified by a licensed medical professional qualified to make the diagnosis
- ▶ Physically or mentally impaired in a way that substantially limits activity, especially in relation to employment or education
- ▶ No restrictions on long term disability vs. short term disability

# Income Eligibility

- ▶ BELOW 30% AMI at intake
- ▶ At or Below 30% AMI at re-certification (not less than every 3 months)
- ▶ Complete written annual income calculation form (intake and re-certification)

# Insufficient Financial Resources and Support Networks

- ▶ “But For”
- ▶ Required at intake and each re-certification
- ▶ Meant to document the lack of resources (e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks)
- ▶ Use form. Be clear and be specific!!!

# Allowable Services – Non-Subsidized Housing (max. \$4,000)

- ▶ Rental arrears (up to 6 months)
- ▶ Rental assistance (shallow subsidy, no more than 12 months)
- ▶ Utility arrears (up to 6 months)
- ▶ Utility assistance (no more than 12 months)
- ▶ Moving assistance
  - Security deposit (up to one month's rent)
  - First month's rent
  - Last month's rent

# Allowable Services – Subsidized Housing (max. \$4,000)

- ▶ Rental arrears (up to six months of the client's portion)
- ▶ Moving assistance
  - Security deposit (up to one month's rent)

# Shelter and Housing Standards

- ▶ Habitability standards apply for all households receiving ESG assistance, includes legal assistance only or arrears only
- ▶ Use the Housing Shelter and Housing Standards Inspection Checklist issued by DHCD



# Lead Based Paint

- ▶ Visual assessment, included in the habitability checklist
- ▶ Applies to all units receiving assistance if constructed before 1978 AND a child under the age of 6 or pregnant woman will live there
- ▶ Online certification process. Go to:  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/training/visualassessment/h00101.htm>

# Fair Market Rent

- ▶ Local FMR limits can be found at:  
<http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/fmr.html>
- ▶ Only applies for rental assistance (including first month's rent)
- ▶ Total rent must be at or below FMR for same size unit
- ▶ Total rent = unit rent + any fees required for occupancy under the lease (other than late fees and pet fees) + monthly allowance for utilities (excluding telephone) under tenant responsibility
- ▶ Contact your regional housing authority to obtain local utility allowance schedules

# Rent Reasonableness

- ▶ Consult your local PHA for rent reasonableness standards
- ▶ Comparable rents can be checked by using a market study or by reviewing comparable units advertised for rent
- ▶ Use Rent Reasonableness checklist (see DHCD website for a copy)

## RENT REASONABLENESS CHECKLIST AND CERTIFICATION

	Proposed Unit	Unit #1	Unit #2	Unit #3
Address				
Number of Bedrooms				
Square Feet				
Type of Unit/Construction				
Housing Condition				
Location/Accessibility				
Amenities				
Unit:				
Site:				
Neighborhood:				
Age in Years				
Utilities (type)				
Unit Rent Utility Allowance Gross Rent				
Handicap Accessible?				

# Proof of Housing Ownership

- ▶ Deed
- ▶ Current water bill
- ▶ Current mortgage payment
- ▶ Recent tax bill, etc.

# Leasing Requirements

- ▶ At-Will Tenancy is acceptable
- ▶ Lease must be in writing and include:
  - Tenant name
  - Address of unit
  - Term of tenancy
  - Move in date
  - Rent amount
  - Responsibility for utilities; and be
  - Signed and dated by property owner and the tenant
- ▶ An ESG sub-recipient must have a copy of signed lease prior to authorizing any payments to the property owner except in the case of a rental arrears payment only.

# Rental Arrears

- ▶ Up to six months of rent in arrears, including any late fees on those arrears
- ▶ Oral agreement may be accepted only if:
  - Oral agreement gives the household an enforceable leasehold
  - Agreement and rent amount owed are sufficiently documented by the property owner's financial records
  - Sub-recipient and/or property owner documents the address of unit, rent amount, move in date, and term of tenant occupancy on letterhead

# Rental Agreement

- ▶ The lease is not the Rental Agreement (RA)
- ▶ The RA must be between property owner and the sub-recipient or sub-contractor actually making the payment
- ▶ The RA is required before ANY payment is made to the property owner
- ▶ Necessary for rental arrears only (pending guidance from HUD)
- ▶ Must document terms of assistance
- ▶ Must require the property owner to submit a copy to the sub-recipient of any notice to the tenant that could lead to an eviction



# Housing Stability Case Management

- ▶ Monthly
- ▶ In person or over the phone
- ▶ Clear, concise, comprehensive case notes
- ▶ Keep participants enrolled at least 3 months
- ▶ We expect participants will remain housed for at least 12 months and sub-recipients will report on participant's housing stability at 6 and 12 months

# Quarterly Re-certification

- ▶ Required every 3 months
- ▶ Complete quarterly assessment in HMIS
- ▶ All eligibility must be re-certified
  - Income (At or Below 30% AMI)
  - 'But for' certification

If a household is no longer eligible for ESG, you must exit them from the program.

# HMIS

- ▶ Must complete an entry assessment, quarterly assessments, and exit assessment
- ▶ Must collect program level data
- ▶ Must produce APR on a quarterly basis
- ▶ Due dates:
  - October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012
  - January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013
  - April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013
  - July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013 (Final APR)
  - Email to [elisa.bresnahan@state.ma.us](mailto:elisa.bresnahan@state.ma.us)

# Termination Policy

- ▶ Written notice defining the reason for termination
- ▶ Appeal process to sub-recipient or sub-contractor
- ▶ Prompt written notice of the final decision

# Ineligible Applicants

- ▶ Must keep case record for each ineligible household that documents reason for ineligibility
- ▶ For those that complete an intake and application a notice of ineligibility should be provided with the option to request a review from the sub-recipient or sub-contractor

# Other Subsidies

Financial assistance cannot be provided to a household who is receiving the same type of assistance through other public sources.

# Feedback Session

- Any questions pertaining to the topics covered
- Challenges/barriers that may be affecting program implementation

Please use the “Raise Your Hand”  
function

# Thank You for Attending!

- ▶ Future webinars (Wednesdays at 11am)
  - 11/28 Tips for a Successful Site Visit
  - 12/12 DHCD ESG Updates and Q&A Session

Please email follow up questions to  
[elisa.bresnahan@state.ma.us](mailto:elisa.bresnahan@state.ma.us) or 617–  
573–1393